

The Schwartzman / Radzyner Family in Brazil



Zolmin and Helena Radzyner Schwartzman, c1935

Simon Schwartzman

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Zolmin and Chaja: the Schwartzman / Radzyner family in Brazil

Zolmin (Salomão) and Chaja (Helena) Schwartzman married in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, in 1935. They both arrived in the country with their parents after World War I and lived in Belo Horizonte most of their lives. They had three children, Bella, Simon and Jacques.

Belo Horizonte is the capital of the Brazilian State of Minas Gerais. It is situated in an elevated mountain region at 450 km from Rio de Janeiro. In the 1930s, it had about 200 thousand inhabitants; today they are 2.5 million.

They were Jewish, but not religious. They spoke Yiddish at home and socialized with the small Jewish community in town, mostly with the “progressist” faction that identified themselves with the

European Bund movement¹. Zolmin worked as a peddler and merchant, selling furniture in a



Zolmin and Chaja, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, c1935

¹ On the Jewish community in Belo Horizonte, see Cuperschmid, Ethel Mizrahiy, *Judeus entre dois mundos: primórdios da comunidade judaica de Belo Horizonte*. Belo Horizonte: Marketing Aumentado, 2013.

small shop in later years. Helena was active in amateur Yiddish theater, took care of the children, and eventually helped the family earning some money, which was always short. He died in 1988, and she in 1997.

The information we have about their early years and original families is fragmentary. They had no documents about their forbearers, just a few pictures, and their children neglected to register their memories while they were alive – young people care more about the future than about the past.

Zolmin's family

Zolmin was born in 1908, the oldest son of Shimson Schwartzman, married to Pesse (Paulina) Rozenfeld. Zolmin used to say that his family was from the small shtetl of Barlidon, Romania, which we could not identify. We assume it was Editnet, a small town in what used to be Bessarabia, a region in the Russian Empire that became part of Romania in 1918 and is now Moldova. In the 1930s Editnet had a population of about 5 thousand, of which 3.5 thousand were Jewish. The only information we have about the original families was a picture of Shia Ersh, described by Zolmin in a handwritten note as “father of father, born and deceased in Barlidon”.



Shia Ersh



Pesse Schwartzman, c.1910

The story goes that Shimson migrated alone to Brazil before World War I, working in Rio de Janeiro as a peddler and saving money to bring his family later. He returned to his home town with his savings, but news spread that a Jew had come from America with lots of money, and he was robbed. He returned to Brazil to start saving again, and, after the end of the war, was able to finally bring his family – Pesse, Zolmin, Sanni and Adelia. Zolmin was about 14. Some years later, in Brazil, they had another daughter, Schendel.



**Shimson, Zolmin, Adelia, Sanni and Pesse
Schwartzman**



Shimson and Pesse Schwartzman

The family lived in Rio de Janeiro until the early 1930s, when Shimson and Adelia got infected with tuberculosis. Belo Horizonte, up in the mountains, was considered to have a much more favorable climate for the lungs, and they moved there. Shimson died in 1933 and Adelia in 1941. Shimson's tomb is the first in Belo Horizonte's Jewish cemetery.

Chaja Radzyner Family

Chaja (Helena) Radzyner was born in Safed, then Palestine, in 1914. She was the daughter of Yaakov Leib Radzyner, one of the grandsons of Reb Chaim Radzyner. Born in Warsaw, Poland, Reb Chaim was from a dynasty of Hasidic rabbis, and migrated to Palestine in 1873 together with his wife Rywka Kossover. They settled in Safed, where they established a Yeshiva, and are both buried there. One of their children, Yitzhak Gavriel Radzyner, followed his parents to Palestine in 1904 together with two of his own children; Yaakov Leib, Chaja's father, and Elimelech. In total, Reb Chaim had seven children, and their descendants who did not die in the Holocaust live today in Israel, the United States, Netherlands, Brazil and other places.

Yaakov married Fruma (Firmina) Shapira (or Sapir, or Szapira), also from a Jewish Polish family. They were married around 1910, and had three children, Joseph (or Youssef), Chaja and Miriam, or Maria. After Miriam's birth, the marriage broke down, and Fruma decided to go to Brazil with the baby, where she had a brother, Abraham Shapira, who had gone there a few years before. Fruma was the sister of Lea, married to Bentzion Heller, who also lived in Safed. In 1950 Chaja's cousin Bernardo Heller (1907-1983), son of Lea and Bentzion, born in Safed, arrived in Brazil. He is survived by his wife Rachel and three children, Leo, Ethel and Tania).



Joseph, Chaja, Fruma Shapira and Yaakov Radzyner, c1906

Yaakov remained in Palestine but later returned to Poland with the other two children. His health was fragile, he had been injured in a mugging while still in Palestine and died at the early age of 34; he is buried in the Lodz cemetery. With this death, the family arranged to send the children to meet the mother in Brazil. They arrived in Rio de Janeiro around 1920, and in the 1930s Joseph died in a typhus epidemic.

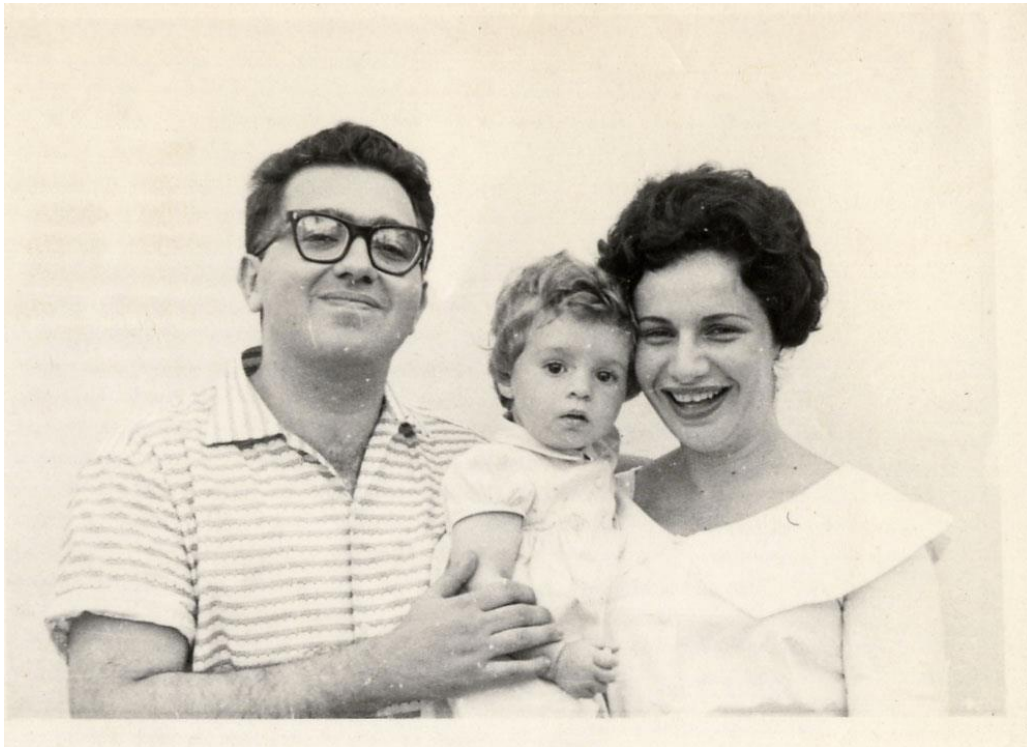
After that, Fruma, who adopted the name of Firmina Shapira, moved to Belo Horizonte, where Chaja eventually met Zolmin and got married. Fruma moved back to Rio de Janeiro with her daughter Miriam, who married Zumala Bonoso, a real state entrepreneur, and had a daughter, Ana Maria, 1945 – 2017.



Fruma and Miriam Shapira, c 1940

Bella Wajnman

Bella was born in Belo Horizonte on August 5, 1936. In 1954 she met Bernardo Wajnman, from Rio de Janeiro, who was an active militant of the Hashomer Hatzair Zionist youth movement.



Bernardo, Solange and Bella Wajnman, c1960

They got married in December 1955, made Aliyah – migrated to Israel - and joined the Yas'ur kibbutz in the Western Galilee. They did not adapt to the new life, however, and in 1958, with Bella pregnant of their first daughter, decided to return to Brazil. They settled in Rio de Janeiro, where Solange was born in August 27, 1958. Bernardo started a new life as a merchant, and a few years later they decided to move to Belo Horizonte, where they had two other children, Simone, born August 5, 1962, and Sergio, born December 19, 1964. Bella died in 1977, at the early age of 40, from an aneurysm, and Bernardo survived her until 1995, when he also passed away.



Sérgio Wajnman



Solange Wajnman

Solange Wajnman studied social sciences, did her graduate work in France, and moved to São Paulo, Brazil, where she teaches sociology at Universidade Paulista (Unip).

Simone Wajnman studied economics and is now a professor at the Department of Demography of the School of Economics at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG). She married João Heraldo Lima and they had three children, Helena (1991), Pedro (1993) and Antônio (1996).

Sergio Wajnman also studied economics, but his life was cut short by a brief illness in 1991, at age 26.



Simone Wajnman, Antônio, Pedro and Helena

Simon Schwartzman



Luisa, Inez, Simon and Isabel, 2008

Simon was born in Belo Horizonte on July 3, 1939. He studied sociology and political science at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Sociology later at the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences in Santiago de Chile and got his Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1966 he married Carmen Lent, from Buenos Aires, and they had one son, Michel Schwartzman, born in Berkeley, USA, on November 16, 1968. Carmen is a clinical psychologist, graduated from the University of Buenos Aires. She is the daughter Menachem Lent and Ziwia Brudersohn, originated from Russia and later Germany. They got divorced a few years later and in 1976 Simon married Inez Maria Farah, from Rio de Janeiro. Inez, also a clinical psychologist, was the daughter of Felipe Farah and Amelia Nasser, from a family of Christian Arabs who migrated from Lebanon and Syria to Brazil in the early 20th century. Inez and Simon live in Rio de Janeiro and have three children, Luisa (October 7, 1977), Isabel (August 5, 1979) and Felipe (February 13, 1981).



Isabel, Felipe, Luisa and Michel Schwartzman



The in-laws: Cristina Javier Albuquerque, Michel's wife; Yuri Tahktheyev, Luisa's husband; Julia Righetti, Felipe's wife

Michel Lent Schwartzman studied graphics design and got his master's degree on interactive communication at the New York University, and works the fields of new communication technologies and business consulting. He lives in Rio de Janeiro with his wife, Cristiana Javier, a culinary chef. They have two children, Gabriel (2006) and Enrique (2012).

Luisa Farah Schwartzman studied economics in Brazil, has a MA from Stanford University, and a Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Madison, Wisconsin; she is associate professor of sociology at the University of Toronto. Luisa is married to Yuri Tahktheyev, from a Russian family, who is a computer science engineer. They have two children, Dimitri (2012) and Alexandre (Sasha, 2014).

Isabel Farah Schwartzman studied social sciences at the University of York, England, did graduate work in Germany and South Africa, and got her master's degree on education technology at Harvard University. She lives in São Paulo, working as an education specialist in a publishing company.

Felipe Farah Schwartzman studied economics at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, London School of Economics, and got his Ph.D. from Princeton University. He is married to Julia Righetti, from Brazil, and have two children, Pedro (2012) and David (2014). They live in Richmond, Virginia, where he works as an economist at the Federal Reserve Bank, and Julia works as a professional photographer.

Jacques Schwartzman

Jacques Schwartzman was born in Rio de Janeiro on June 10, 1945 but lived most of his life in Belo Horizonte. He studied economics at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, where he worked as a professor of economics and in several capacities as a higher education administrator. He is married to Riva Satovschi, daughter of Lipa Satovschi and Doba Boczar. Riva is a psychoanalyst who also taught at the Federal University of Minas Gerais. They both did their graduate studies in the United States, he at the University of Pittsburgh and she at Duquesne University. They have two daughters, Ana (1988) and Laura (1991).



Jacques and Riva Schwartzman



Ana and Laura Satovschi Schwartzman

Ana Satovschi Schwartzman is a fashion designer, married to Otávio Corlaiti, an engineer. Laura Satovschi Schwartzman is a business administrator, and they all live in Belo Horizonte.

The New Generation



From top left: the children of Cristiana and Michel, Gabriel and Enrique; the children of Luisa and Yuri, Dimitri and Sasha (Alexandre); and the children of Julia and Felipe, Pedro and David.